# THE PATRON.

## A COMEDY.

IN THREE ACTS.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE in the HAY-MARKET.

By SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq;

DUBLIN:

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MDCC LXIV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

# Granville Leveſon Gower,

# EARL GOWER,

## Lord Chamberlain of his Majeſty's Houſhold.

My Lord,

THE following little comedy, founded on a ſtory of M. Marmontelle's, and calculated to expoſe the frivolity and ignorance of the pretenders to learning, with the inſolence and vanity of their ſuperficial, illiberal protectors, can be addreſſed to no nobleman with more propriety than to Lord Gower; whoſe judgment, though elegant, is void of affectation; and whoſe patronage, though powerful, is deſtitute of all faſtidious parade. It is with pleaſure, my Lord, that the public ſees your Lordſhip placed at the head of that department which is to decide, without appeal, on the moſt popular domain in the whole repub-

lic of letters; a ſpot that has always been diſtinguiſhed with affection, and cultivated with care, by every ruler the leaſt attentive to either chaſtiſing the morals, poliſhing the manners, or what is of equal importance, rationally amuſing the leiſure of the people.

The Patron, my Lord, who now begs your protection, has had the good fortune to be well received by the public; and indeed, of all the pieces that I have had the honour to offer them, this ſeems to me to have the faireſt claim to their favour.

But the play, ſtripped of thoſe theatrical ornaments for which it is indebted to your Lordſhip's indulgence, muſt now plead its own cauſe; nor will I, my Lord, with an affected humility, echo the trite, coarſe, though claſſical compliment, of Optimus patronus peſſimus poeta: For if this be really true of the laſt, the firſt can have but ſmall pretenſions to praiſe; patronizing bad poets being, in my poor opinion, full as pernicious to the progreſs of letters, as neglecting the good.

In humble hopes then, my Lord, of not being thought the meaneſt in the muſes train, I have taken the liberty to prefix your name to this dedication, and publickly to acknowledge my obligations to your Lordſhip;

ſhip; which, let me boaſt too, I have had the happineſs to receive, untainted by the inſolence of domeſtics, the delays of office, or the chilling ſuperiority of rank; mortifications which have been too often experienced by much greater writers than myſelf, from much leſs men than your Lordſhip.

My Lord, I have the honour to be, with the greateſt reſpect and gratitude,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obliged,

and moſt devoted,

humble ſervant,

West End,
June 20, 1764.

SAMUEL FOOTE.

# Dramatis Perſonæ.

Sir THOMAS LOFTY,

Sir PETER PEPPERPOT,

DICK BEVER,

FRANK YOUNGER,

Sir ROGER DOWLAS,

Mr. RUST,

Mr. DACTYL,

Mr. PUFF,

Mr. STAYTAPE,

ROBIN,

JOHN,

Two Blacks,

Miſs JULIET.

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# THE PATRON.

## ACT I.

*Scene the Street.*

*Enter* BEVER *and* YOUNGER.

YOUNGER.

NO, Dick, you muſt pardon me.

*Bev.* Nay, but to ſatisfy your curioſity.

*Youn.* I tell you, I have not a jot.

*Bev.* Why then to gratify me.

*Youn.* At rather too great an expence.

*Bev.* To a fellow of your obſervation and turn, I ſhould think now ſuch a ſcene a moſt delicate treat.

*Youn.* Delicate! Palling, naufeous, to a dreadful degree. To a lover, indeed, the charms of the niece may palliate the uncle's fulſome formality.

*Bev.* The uncle! ay, but then you know he is only one of the group.

*Youn.* That's true; but the figures are all finiſhed alike. A maniere, a tireſome ſameneſs throughout.

*Bev.* There you will excuſe me; I am ſure there is no want of variety.

*Youn.* No! then let us have a detail. Come, Dick, give us a bill of the play.

*Bev.*

*Bev.* Firſt, you know, there's Juliet's uncle.

*Youn.* What, Sir Thomas Lofty! the modern Midas, or rather (as fifty dedications will tell you) the Pollio, the Atticus, the patron of genius, the protector of arts, the paragon of poets, decider on merit, chief juſtice of taſte, and ſworn appraiſer to Apollo and the tuneful nine. Ha, ha. Oh, the tedious, inſipid, inſufferable coxcomb!

*Bev.* Nay, now, Frank, you are too extravagant. He is univerſally allow'd to have taſte; ſharp-judging Adriel, the muſe's friend, himſelf a muſe.

*Youn.* Taſte! by whom? underling bards, that he feeds; and broken bookſellers, that he bribes. Look ye, Dick, what raptures you pleaſe, when Miſs Lofty is your theme, but expect no quarter for the reſt of the family. I tell thee once for all, Lofty is a rank impoſtor, the bufo of an illiberal mercenary tribe; he has neither genius to create, judgment to diſtinguiſh, or generoſity to reward; his wealth has gain'd him flattery from the indigent, and the haughty inſolence of his pretence, admiration from the ignorant. Voila le portrait de votre uncle. Now on to the next.

*Bev.* The ingenious and erudite Mr. Ruſt.

*Youn.* What, old Martin, the medal-monger?

*Bev.* The ſame, and my rival in Juliet.

*Youn.* Rival! what, Ruſt? why he's too modern for him by a couple of centuries. Martin! why he likes no heads but upon coins. Marry'd! the mummy! Why 'tis not above a fortnight ago that I ſaw him making love to the figure without a noſe, in Somerſet-Gardens; I caught him ſtroaking the marble plaits of her gown, and aſked him, if he was not aſhamed to take ſuch liberties with ladies in public.

*Bev.* What an inconſtant old ſcoundrel it is.

*Youn.* Oh, a Dorimant. But how came this about? what could occaſion the change? was it in the power of fleſh and blood to ſeduce this adorer of virtù from his marble and porphyry?

*Bev.* Juliet has done it; and what will ſurprize you, his taſte was a bawd to the buſineſs.

*Youn.* Prythee explain.

*Bev.*

*Bev.* Juliet met him laſt week at her uncle's: he was a little pleaſed with the Greek of her profile; but on a cloſer enquiry, he found the turn-up of her noſe too exactly reſemble the buſt of the princeſs Popæa.

*Youn.* The chaſte moiety of the amiable Nero.

*Bev.* The ſame.

*Youn.* Oh, the deuce! then your buſineſs was done in an inſtant.

*Bev.* Immediately. In favour of the tip, he offered chart blanche for the reſt of the figure, which (as you may ſuppoſe) was inſtantly caught at.

*Youn.* Doubtleſs. But who have we here?

*Bev.* This is one of Lofty's companions, a Weſt-Indian of an over-grown fortune. He ſaves me the trouble of a portrait. This is Sir Peter Pepperpot.

*Enter Sir* Peter Pepperpot *and two blacks.*

*Sir P.* Careleſs ſcoundrels! barkee, raſcals! I'll baniſh you home, you dogs! you ſhall back, and broil in the ſun. Mr. Bever, your humble; Sir, I am, your entirely devoted.

*Bev.* You ſeem mov'd; what has been the matter Sir Peter?

*Sir. P.* Matter! why I am invited to dinner on a barbicu, and the villains have forgot my bottle of Chian.

*Youn.* Unpardonable.

*Sir P.* Ay, this country has ſpoiled them; this ſame chriſtening will ruin the colonies.—Well, dear Bever, rare news, boy; our fleet is arriv'd from the Weſt.

*Bev.* It is?

*Sir P.* Ay, lad; and a glorious cargo of turtle. It was lucky I went to Brighthelmſtone: I nick'd the time to a hair; thin as a lath, and a ſtomach as ſharp as a ſhark's: Never was in a finer condition for feeding.

*Bev.* Have you a large importation, Sir Peter?

*Sir P.* Nine; but ſeven in excellent order: The captain aſſures me they greatly gain'd ground on the voyage.

*Bev.* How do you diſpoſe of them?

*Sir P.* Four to Cornhill, three to Almack's, and the two ſickly ones I ſhall ſend to my borough in Yorkſhire.

*Youn.*

*Youn.* Ay! what, have the provincials a reliſh for turtle?

*Sir P.* Sir, it is amazing how this country improves in turtle and turnpikes; to which (give me leave to ſay) we, from our part of the world, have not a little contributed. Why, formerly, Sir, a brace of bucks on the mayor's annual day was thought a pretty moderate bleſſing. But we, Sir, have poliſh'd their palates: Why, Sir, not the meaneſt member of my corporation but can diſtinguiſh the paſh from the pee.

*Youn.* Indeed!

*Sir P.* Ay, and ſever the green from the ſhell, with the ſkill of the ableſt anatomiſt.

*Youn.* And they are fond of it?

*Sir P.* Oh, that the conſumption will tell you. The ſtated allowance is ſix pounds to an alderman, and five to each of their wives.

*Bev.* A plentiful proviſion.

*Sir P.* But there was never known any waſte: The mayor, recorder, and rector, are permitted to eat as much as they pleaſe.

*Youn.* The entertainment is pretty expenſive.

*Sir P.* Land carriage and all. But I contriv'd to ſmuggle the laſt that I ſent them.

*Bev.* Smuggle! I don't underſtand you.

*Sir P.* Why, Sir, the raſcally coachman had always charged me five pounds for the carriage. Damn'd dear! Now my cook going at the ſame time into the country, I made him clap a capuchin upon the turtle, and for thirty ſhillings put him an inſide paſſenger in the Doncaſter Fly.

*Youn.* A happy expedient.

*Bev.* Oh! Sir Peter has infinite humour.

*Sir P.* Yes, but the frolick had like to have proved fatal.

*Youn.* How ſo?

*Sir. P.* The maid at the Rummer at Hatfield popp'd her head into the coach to know if the company would have any breakfaſt; Ecod, the turtle, Sir, laid hold of her noſe, and flapp'd her face with his fins, till the poor devil fell into a fit. Ha, ha, ha.

*Youn.*

*Youn.* Oh, an abſolute Rabelais.

*Bev.* What, I reckon, Sir Peter, you are going to the ſquare?

*Sir P.* Yes; I extremely admire Sir Thomas: You know this is his day of aſſembly; I ſuppoſe you will be there: I can tell you, you are a wonderful favourite.

*Bev.* Am I?

*Sir P.* He ſays your natural genius is fine; and when poliſh'd by his cultivation will ſurprize and aſtoniſh the world.

*Bev.* I hope, Sir, I ſhall have your voice with the public.

*Sir P.* Mine! O fye, Mr. Bever.

*Bev.* Come, come, you are no inconſiderable patron.

*Sir P.* He, he, he. Can't ſay but I love to encourage the arts.

*Bev.* And have contributed largely yourſelf.

*Youn.* What, is Sir Peter an author?

*Sir P.* O fye! what me? a mere dabbler; have blotted my fingers, 'tis true. Some ſonnets, that have not been thought wanting in ſalt.

*Bev.* And your epigrams.

*Sir P.* Not entirely without point.

*Bev.* But come, Sir Peter, the love of the arts is not the ſole cauſe of your viſits to the houſe you are going to.

*Sir P.* I don't underſtand you.

*Bev.* Miſs Juliet the niece.

*Sir P.* O fye! what chance have I there? Indeed if lady Pepperpot ſhould happen to pop off——

*Bev.* I don't know that. You are, Sir Peter, a dangerous man; and were I a father, or uncle, I ſhould not be a little ſhy of your viſits.

*Sir P.* Pſha! dear Bever, you banter.

*Bev.* And (unleſs I am extremely out in my gueſs) that lady——

*Sir P.* Hey! what, what, dear Bever?

*Bev.* But if you ſhould betray me——

*Sir P.* May I never eat a bit of green fat, if I do.

*Bev.* Hints have been dropped.

*Sir P.* The devil! come a little this way.

*Bev.* Well made; not robuſt and gigantic, 'tis true, but extremely genteel.

*Sir P.*

*Sir P.* Indeed!

*Bev.* Features, not entirely regular; but marking, with an air now, ſuperior; greatly above the—you underſtand me?

*Sir P.* Perfectly. Something noble; expreſſive of—faſhion.

*Bev.* Right.

*Sir P.* Yes, I have been frequently told ſo.

*Bev.* Not an abſolute wit; but ſomething infinitely better: An enjouement, a ſpirit, a—

*Sir P.* Gaiety. I was ever ſo from a child.

*Bev.* In ſhort, your dreſs, addreſs, with a thouſand other particulars, that at preſent I can't recollect.

*Sir P.* Why, dear Bever, to tell thee the truth, I have always admired Miſs Juliet, and a delicate creature ſhe is: Sweet as a ſugar-cane, ſtraight as a bamboo, and her teeth as white as a negro's.

*Bev.* Poetic, but true. Now only conceive, Sir Peter, ſuch a plantation of perfections to be devoured by that caterpillar Ruſt.

*Sir P.* A liquoriſh grub! Are pine apples for ſuch muckworms as he? I'll ſend him a jar of citrons and ginger, and poiſon the pipkin.

*Bev.* No, no.

*Sir P.* Or invite him to dinner, and mix rat's-bane along with his curry.

*Bev.* Not ſo precipitate; I think we may defeat him without any danger.

*Sir P.* How, how?

*Bev.* I have a thought—but we muſt ſettle the plan with the lady. Could not you give her the hint, that I ſhould be glad to ſee her a moment.

*Sir P.* I'll do it directly.

*Bev.* But don't let Sir Thomas perceive you.

*Sir P.* Never fear. You'll follow?

*Bev.* The inſtant I've ſettled matters with her; but fix the old fellow ſo that ſhe may not be miſs'd.

*Sir P.* I'll nail him, I warrant; I have his opinion to beg on this manuſcript.

*Bev.* Your own?

*Sir P.* No.

*Bev.*

Oh ho! what ſomething new from the doctor, your chaplain?

*Sir P.* He! no, no. O Lord, he's elop'd.

*Bev.* How!

*Sir P.* Gone. You know he was to dedicate his volume of fables to me: So I gave him thirty pounds to get my arms engrav'd, to prefix (by way of print) to the frontiſpiece; and, O grief of griefs! the doctor has mov'd off with the money. I'll ſend you Miſs Juliet. [*Exit.*

*Bev.* There now is a ſpecial protector; the arts, I think, can't but flouriſh under ſuch a Mecænas.

*Youn.* Heaven viſits with a taſte the wealthy fool.

*Bev.* True; but then to juſtify the diſpenſation, From hence the poor are cloath'd, the hungry fed, Fortunes to bookſellers, to authors bread.

*Youn.* The diſtribution is, I own, a little unequal: And here comes a moſt melancholy inſtance; poor Dick Dactyl, and his publiſher Puff.

*Enter* Dactyl *and* Puff.

*Puff.* Why, then, Mr. Dactyl, carry them to ſomebody elſe; there are people enough in trade; but I wonder you would meddle with poetry; you know it rarely pays for the paper.

*Dac.* And how can one help it, Mr. Puff? genius impels, and when a man is once liſted in the ſervice of the muſes——

*Puff.* Why, let him give them warning, as ſoon as he can. A pretty ſort of ſervice, indeed! where there are neither wages nor vails. The muſes! And what, I ſuppoſe this is the livery they give. Gadzooks, I had rather be a waiter at Ranelagh.

*Bev.* The poet and publiſher at variance: What is the matter, Mr. Dactyl?

*Dac.* As Gad ſhall judge me, Mr. Bever, as pretty a poem, and ſo polite; not a mortal can take any offence; all full of panegyric and praiſe.

*Puff.* A fine character he gives of his works. No offence? the greateſt in the world, Mr. Dactyl. Panegyric and praiſe! and what will that do with the publick? why who the devil will give money to be

told, that Mr. Such-a-one is a wiſer or better man than himſelf? no, no; 'tis quite and clean out of nature. A good ſouſing ſatire now, well powder'd with perſonal pepper, and ſeaſon'd with the ſpirit of party; that demoliſhes a conſpicuous character, and ſinks him below our own level; there, there, we are pleas'd; there we chuckle, and grin, and toſs the half-crowns on the counter.

*Dac.* Yes, and ſo get cropp'd for a libel.

*Puff.* Cropp'd! ay, and the luckieſt thing that can happen to you. Why, I would not give two-pence for an author that is afraid of his ears. Writing, writing is, (as I may ſay) Mr. Dacty!, a ſort of a warfare, where none can be victor that is the leaſt afraid of a ſcar. Why, zooks, Sir, I never got ſalt to my porridge till I mounted at the Royal Exchange.

*Bev.* Indeed!

*Puff.* No, no; that was the making of me. Then my name made a noiſe in the world. Talk of forked hills, and of Helicon! romantic and fabulous fluff. The true Caſtalian ſtream is a ſhower of eggs, and a pillory the poet's Parnaſſus.

*Dac.* Ay, to you indeed it may anſwer; but what do we get for our pains?

*Puff.* Why, what the deuce would you get? food, fire, and fame. Why you would not grow fat! a corpulent poet is a monſter, a prodigy! no, no; ſpare diet is a ſpur to the fancy; high feeding would but founder your Pegaſus.

*Dac.* Why, you impudent illiterate raſcal! who is it you dare treat in this manner?

*Puff.* Heyday! what is the matter now?

*Dac.* And is this the return for all the obligations you owe me? But no matter; the world, the world ſhall know what you are, and how you have us'd me.

*Puff.* Do your worſt; I deſpiſe you.

*Dac.* They ſhall be told from what a dunghill you ſprang. Gentlemen, if there be faith in a ſinner, that fellow owes every ſhilling to me.

*Puff.* To thee!

*Dac.*

*Dac.* Ay, Sirrah, to me. In what kind of way did I find you? then where and what was your ſtate? Gentlemen, his ſhop was a ſhed in Moorfields; his kitchen, a broken pipkin of charcoal; and his bed-chamber under the counter.

*Puff.* I never was fond of expence; I ever minded my trade.

*Dac.* Your trade! and pray with what ſtock did you trade? I can give you the catalogue? I believe it won't overburthen my memory. Two odd volumes of Swift; the life of Moll Flanders, with cuts; the Five Senſes, printed and coloured by Overton; a few claſſics, thumb'd and blotted by the boys of the Charterhouſe; with the trial of Dr. Sacheverel.

*Puff.* Malice.

*Dac* Then, Sirrah, I gave you my Canning: it was ſhe firſt ſet you afloat.

*Puff.* A grub.

*Dac.* And it is not only my writings: You know, Sirrah, what you owe to my phyſick.

*Bev.* How! a phyſician?

*Dac.* Yes, Mr. Bever; phyſick and poetry. Apollo is the patron of both: Opiferque per orbem dicor.

*Puff.* His phyſick!

*Dac.* My phyſick! ay, my phyſick: Why, dare you deny it, you raſcal! What have you forgot my powders for flatulent crudities?

*Puff.* No.

*Dac.* My coſmetic lozenge, and ſugar plums?

*Puff.* No.

*Dac.* My coral fot cutting of teeth, my potions, my lotions, my pregnancy-drops, with my paſte for ſuperfluous hairs?

*Puff.* No, no; have you done?

*Dac.* No, no, no; but I believe this will ſuffice for the preſent.

*Puff.* Now would not any mortal believe that I ow'd my all to this fellow?

*Bev.* Why, indeed, Mr. Puff, the balance does ſeem in his favour.

*Puff.* In his favour! why you don't give any credit to him: a reptile, a bug, that owes his very being to me.

*Dac.* I, I, I!

*Puff.* You, you! What, I ſuppoſe you forget your garret in Wine-office-court, when you furniſh'd paragraphs for the Farthing-poſt at twelve-pence a dozen.

*Dac.* Fiction.

*Puff.* Then, did not I get you made collector of caſualties to the Whitehall and St. James's? but that poſt your lazineſs loſt you. Gentlemen, he never brought them a robbery till the highwayman was going to be hang'd; a birth till the chriſtening was over; nor a death till the hatchment was up.

*Dac.* Mighty well!

*Puff.* And now, becauſe the fellow has got a little in fleſh, by being puff to the play houſe this winter, (to which, by the bye, I got him appointed) he is as proud and as vain as Voltaire. But I ſhall ſoon have him under; the vacation will come.

*Dac.* Let it.

*Puff.* Then I ſhall have him ſneaking and cringing, hanging about me, and begging a bit of tranſlation.

*Dac.* I beg, I, for tranſlation?

*Puff.* No, no, not a line; not if you would do it for two pence a ſheet. No boil'd beef and carrot at mornings; no more cold pudding and porter. You may take your leave of my ſhop.

*Dac.* Your ſhop! then at parting I will leave you a legacy.

*Bev.* O fye, Mr. Dactyl!

*Puff.* Let him alone.

*Dac.* Pray, gentlemen, let me do myſelf juſtice.

*Bev.* Younger, reſtrain the publiſher's fire.

*Youn.* Fie, gentlemen, ſuch an illiberal combat: it is a ſcandal to the republic of letters.

*Bev.* Mr. Dactyl, an old man, a mechanic, beneath——

*Dac.* Sir, I am calm; that thought has reſtor'd me. To your inſignificancy you are indebted for ſafety. But what my generoſity has ſaved, my pen ſhall deſtroy.

*Puff.*

*Puff.* Then you muſt get ſomebody to mend it.

*Dac.* Adieu!

*Puff.* Farewell! [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

*Bev.* Ha, ha, ha! come, let us along to the ſquare.

Blockheads with reaſon wicked wits abhor,
But dunce with dunce is barb'rous civil war.

End of the First Act.

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## ACT II. *Scene continues.*

*Enter* Bever *and* Younger.

*Youn.* POOR Dacty!! and dwells ſuch mighty rage in little men? I hope there is no danger of bloodſhed.

*Bev.* Oh, not in the leaſt: The gens vatum, the nation of poets, though an irritable, are yet a placable people. Their mutual intereſts will ſoon bring them together again.

*Youn.* But ſhall not we be late? the critical ſenate is by this time aſſembled.

*Bev.* I warrant you, frequent and full; where

Stately Bufo, puff'd by ev'ry quill,
Sits like Apollo, on his forked hill.

But you know I muſt wait for Miſs Lofty; I am now totally directed by her; ſhe gives me the key to all Sir Thomas's foibles, and preſcribes the moſt proper method to feed them; but what good purpoſe that will produce——

*Youn.* Is ſhe clever, adroit?

*Bev.* Doubtleſs, I like your aſking the queſtion of me.

*Youn.* Then pay an implicit obedience: The ladies, in theſe caſes, generally know what they are about. The door opens.

*Bev.* It is Juliet, and with her old Ruſt. Enter, Frank: You know the knight, ſo no introduction is wanted. [*Exit* Younger.] I ſhould be glad to hear this reverend piece of lumbe make love; the court-

ſhip muſt certainly be curious, Good manners ſtand by; by your leave I will liſten a little. [Bever *retires.*]

*Enter* Juliet *and* Ruſt.

*Jul.* And your collection is large?

*Ruſt.* Moſt curious and capital. When, Madam, will you give me leave to add your charms to my catalogue?

*Jul.* O dear! Mr. Ruſt, I ſhall but diſgrace it. Beſides, Sir, when I marry, I am reſolv'd to have my huſband all to myſelf: Now for the poſſeſſion of your heart I ſhall have too many competitors.

*Ruſt.* How, Madam! were Prometheus alive, and would animate the Helen that ſtands in my hall, ſhe ſhould not coſt me a ſigh.

*Jul.* Ay, Sir, there lies my greateſt misfortune. Had I only thoſe who are alive to contend with, by aſſiduity, affection, cares, and careſſes, I might ſecure my conqueſt: though that would be difficult; for I am convinc'd were you, Mr. Ruſt, put up by Preſtage to auction, the Apollo Belvidere would not draw a greater number of bidders.

*Ruſt.* Would that were the caſe, Madam, ſo I might be thought a proper companion to the Venus de Medicis.

*Jul.* The flower of rhetoric, and pink of politeneſs. But my fears are not confined to the living; for every nation and age, even painters and ſtatuaries, conſpire againſt me. Nay, when the pantheon itſelf, the very goddeſſes riſe up as my rivals, what chance has a mortal like me.——I ſhall certainly laugh in his face. [*Aſide.*]

*Ruſt.* She is a delicate ſubject.——Goddeſſes, Madam: zooks, had you been on Mount Ida when Paris decided the conteſt, the Cyprian queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

*Jul.* Extravagant gallantry.

*Ruſt.* In you, Madam, are concentered all the beauties of the Heathen mythology: The open front of Diana, the luſtre of Pallas's eyes,——

*Jul.* Oh, Sir!

*Ruſt.*

*Ruſt.* The chromatic muſick of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebè, the imperial port of Queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

*Jul.* I ſee, Sir, antiquity has not engroſs'd all your attention: You are no novice in the nature of woman. Incenſe, I own, is grateful to moſt of my ſex; but there are times when adoration may be diſpens'd with.

*Ruſt.* Ma'am!

*Jul.* I ſay, Sir, when we women willingly wave our rank in the ſkies, and wiſh to be treated as mortals.

*Ruſt.* Doubtleſs, Madam: And are you wanting in materials for that? No, Madam; as in dignity you ſurpaſs the Heathen divinities, ſo in the charms of attraction you beggar the queens of the earth. The whole world, at different periods, has contributed its ſeveral beauties to form you.

*Jul.* The deuce it has! [*Aſide.*]

*Ruſt.* See there the ripe Aſiatic perfection, join'd to the delicate ſoftneſs of Europe. In you, Madam, I burn to poſſeſs Cleopatra's alluring glances, the Greek profile of queen Clytemneſtra, the Roman noſe of the empreſs Popæa——

*Jul.* With the majeſtic march of queen Beſs. Mercy on me, what a wonderful creature am I!

*Ruſt.* In ſhort, Madam, not a feature you have, but recals to my mind ſome trait in a medal or buſt.

*Jul.* Indeed! why, by your account, I muſt be an abſolute olio, a perfect ſalamongundy of charms.

*Ruſt.* Oh, Madam, how can you demean, as I may ſay, undervalue——

*Jul.* Value! there is the thing; and to tell you the truth, Mr. Ruſt, in that word value lies my greateſt objection.

*Ruſt.* I don't underſtand you.

*Jul.* Why then I will explain myſelf. It has been ſaid, and I believe with ſome ſhadow of truth, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre; now I am afraid when you and I grow a little more intimate,

which

which I ſuppoſe muſt be the caſe if you proceed on your plan, you will be horribly diſappointed in your high expectations, and ſoon diſcover this Juno, this Cleopatra, and princeſs Popæa, to be as arrant a mortal as madam your mother.

*Ruſt.* Madam, I, I, I——

*Jul.* Your patience a moment. Being therefore deſirous to preſerve your devotion, I beg for the future you would pleaſe to adore at a diſtance.

*Ruſt.* To Endymion, Madam, Luna once liſtened.

*Jul.* Ay, but he was another kind of a mortal; you may do very well as a votary; but for a huſband ——mercy upon me!

*Ruſt.* Madam, you are not in earneſt, not ſerious?

*Jul.* Not ſerious! Why have you the impudence to think of marrying a goddeſs?

*Ruſt.* I ſhould hope——

*Jul.* And what ſhould you hope? I find your devotion reſembles that of the world: When the power of ſinning is over, and the ſprightly firſt-runnings of life are rack'd off, you offer the vapid dregs to your deity. No, no; you may if you pleaſe, turn monk in my ſervice. One vow, I believe, you will obſerve better than moſt of them, Chaſtity.

*Ruſt.* Permit me——

*Jul.* Or, if you muſt marry, take your Julia, your Portia, or Flora, your Fum-fam from China, or your Egyptian Oſiris. You have long paid your addreſſes to them.

*Ruſt.* Marry! what, marble?

*Jul.* The propereſt wives in the world; you can't chooſe amiſs; they will ſupply you with all that you want.

*Ruſt.* Your uncle has, madam, conſented.

*Jul.* That is more than ever his niece will. Conſented! and to what? to be ſwath'd to a mould'ring mummy; or be lock'd up, like your medals, to canker and ruſt in a cabinet! no, no; I was made for the world, and the world ſhall not be robb'd of its right.

*Bev.* Bravo, Juliet! Gad, ſhe's a fine-ſpirited girl.

*Jul.*

*Jul.* My profile, indeed! No, Sir, when I marry, I muſt have a man that will meet my full face.

*Ruſt.* Might I be heard for a moment?

*Jul.* To what end? You ſay, you have Sir Thomas Lofty's conſent; I tell you, you can never have mine. You may ſcreen me from, or expoſe me to, my uncle's reſentment; the choice is your own: If you lay the fault at my door you will, doubtleſs, greatly diſtreſs me; but take the blame on yourſelf, and I ſhall own myſelf extremely oblig'd to you.

*Ruſt.* How! confeſs myſelf in the fault?

*Jul.* Ay; for the beſt thing a man can do, when he finds he can't be belov'd, is to take care he is not heartily hated. There is no other alternative.

*Ruſt.* Madam, I ſha'n't break my word with Sir Thomas.

*Jul.* Nor I with myſelf. So there's an end of our conference. Sir, your very obedient.

*Ruſt.* Madam, I, I, don't—that is, let me—But no matter. Your ſervant. [*Exit.*

*Jul.* Ha, ha, ha!

*Enter* Bever *from behind.*

*Bev.* Ha, ha, ha! Incomparable Juliet! How the old dotard trembled and totter'd; he could not have been more inflam'd, had he been robb'd of his Otho.

*Jul.* Ay; was ever goddeſs ſo familiarly us'd? In my conſcience, I began to be afraid that he would treat me as the Indians do their dirty divinities; whenever they are deaf to their prayers, they beat and abuſe them.

*Bev.* But, after all, we are in an aukward ſituation.

*Jul.* How ſo?

*Bev.* I have my fears.

*Jul.* So have not I.

*Bev.* Your uncle has reſolv'd that you ſhould be marry'd to Ruſt.

*Jul.* Ay, he may decree; but it is I that muſt execute.

*Bev.* But ſuppoſe, he has given his word.

*Jul.* Why then let him recal it again.

*Bev.* But are you ſure you ſhall have courage enough——

*Jul.*

*Jul.* To ſay No? That requires much reſolution, indeed.

*Bev.* Then I am at the heighth of my hopes.

*Jul.* Your hopes! Your hopes and your fears are ill-founded alike.

*Bev.* Why, you are determined not to be his.

*Jul.* Well, and what then?

*Bev.* What then! why then you will be mine.

*Jul.* Indeed! and is that the natural conſequence; whoever won't be his, muſt be yours. Is that the logic of Oxford?

*Bev.* Madam, I did flatter myſelf——

*Jul.* Then you did very wrong, indeed, Mr. Bever: You ſhould ever guard againſt flattering yourſelf; for of all dangerous paraſites, ſelf is the worſt.

*Bev.* I am aſtoniſh'd!

*Jul.* Aſtoniſh'd! you are mad, I believe! Why, I have not known you a month; it is true my uncle ſays your father is his friend; your fortune, in time, will be eaſy; your figure is not remarkably faulty; and as to your underſtanding paſſable enough for a young fellow who has not ſeen much of the world; but when one talks of a huſband—Lord, it's quite another ſort of a—Ha, ha, ha! Poor Bever, how he ſtares! he ſtands like a ſtatue!

*Bev.* Statue! Indeed, Madam, I am very near petrified.

*Jul.* Even then you will make as good a huſband as Ruſt. But go, run, and join the aſſembly within: Be attentive to every word, motion and look of my uncle's; be dumb when he ſpeaks, admire all he ſays, laugh when he ſmirks, bow when he ſneezes; in ſhort, fawn, flatter, and cringe; don't be afraid of overloading his ſtomach, for the knight has a noble digeſtion, and you will find ſome there who will keep you in countenance.

*Bev.* I fly. So then, Juliet your intention was only to try——

*Jul.* Don't plague me with impertinent queſtions; march; obey my directions. We muſt leave the iſſue to Chance; a greater friend to mankind than they are willing to own. Oh, if any thing new ſhould occur,

cur, you may come into the drawing-room for further inſtructions. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE, a Room in Sir Thomas Lofty's Houſe.

Sir Thomas, Ruſt, Puff, Dactyl, *and others, diſcovered ſitting.*

*Sir Tho.* Nothing new to-day from Parnaſſus?

*Dac.* Not that I hear.

*Sir Tho.* Nothing critical, philoſophical, or political?

*Puff.* Nothing.

*Sir Tho.* Then in this diſette, this dearth of invention, give me leave, gentlemen, to diſtribute my ſtores. I have here in my hand a little, ſmart, ſatyrical epigram; new, and prettily pointed: in ſhort, a production that Martial himſelf would not have bluſh'd to acknowledge.

*Ruſt.* Your own, Sir Thomas?

*Sir Tho.* O fie! no; ſent me this morning, anonymous.

*Dac.* Pray, Sir Thomas, let us have it.

*All.* By all means; by all means.

*Sir Tho.* TO PHILLIS.

Think'ſt thou, fond Phillis, Strephon told thee true,
Angels are painted fair to look like you:
Another ſtory all the town will tell;
Phillis paints fair—to look like an an-gel.

*All.* Fine! fine! very fine!

*Dac.* Such an eaſe and ſimplicity.

*Puff.* The turn ſo unexpected and quick.

*Ruſt.* The ſatyr ſo poignant,

*Sir Tho.* Yes; I think it poſſeſſes, in an eminent degree, the three great epigrammatical requiſites; brevity, familiarity, and ſeverity.

Phillis paints fair—to look like an an-gel.

*Dac.* Happy! Is the Phillis, the ſubject, a ſecret?

*Sir Tho.* Oh, dear me! nothing perſonal; no, an impromptu; a mere jeu d' eſprit.

*Puff.* Then, Sir Thomas, the ſecret is out; it is your own.

*Dac.* That was obvious enough.

*Puff.* Who is there elſe could have wrote it?

*Ruſt.* True, true.

Sir

*Sir Tho.* The name of the author is needleſs. So it is an acquiſition to the republic of letters, any gentleman may claim the merit that will.

*Puff.* What a noble contempt!

*Dac.* What greatneſs of mind!

*Ruſt.* Scipio and Lælius were the Roman Loftys. Why, I dare believe Sir Thomas has been the making of half the authors in town: He is, as I may ſay, the great manufacturer; the other poets are but pedlars, that live by retailing his wares.

*All.* Ha, ha, ha! well obſerv'd, Mr. Ruſt.

*Sir Tho.* Ha, ha, ha! Molle atque facetum. Why, to purſue the metaphor, if Sir Thomas Lofty was to call in his poetical debts, I believe there would be a good many bankrupts in the Muſes gazette.

*All.* Ha, ha, ha!

*Sir Tho.* But a propos, gentlemen; with regard to the eclipſe: You found my calculation exact?

*Dac.* To a digit.

*Sir Tho.* Total darkneſs, indeed! and birds going to rooſt! Thoſe philomaths, thoſe almanack-makers, are the moſt ignorant raſcals—

*Puff.* It is amazing where Sir Thomas Lofty ſtores all his knowledge.

*Dac.* It is wonderful how the mind of man can contain it.

*Sir Tho.* Why, to tell you the truth, that circumſtance has a good deal engag'd my attention; and I believe you will admit my method of ſolving the phenomenon philoſophical and pleaſant enough.

*Puff.* Without queſtion.

*All.* Doubtleſs.

*Sir Tho.* I ſuppoſe, gentlemen, my memory, or mind, to be a cheſt of drawers, a kind of bureau; where, in ſeparate cellules, my different knowledge on different ſubjects is ſtor'd.

*Ruſt.* A prodigious diſcovery!

*All.* Amazing!

*Sir Tho.* To this cabinet volition, or will, has a key; ſo when an arduous ſubject occurs, I unlock my bureau, pull out the particular drawer, and am ſupply'd with what I want in an inſtant.

*Dac.*

*Dac.* A Malbranch!

*Puff.* A Boyle!

*All.* A Locke!

*Enter a* Servant.

*Serv* Mr. Bever. [*Exit.*

*Sir Tho.* A young gentleman from Oxford, recommended to my care by his father. The univerſity has given him a good ſolid Doric foundation; and when he has received from you a few Tuſcan touches, the Ionic and Corinthian graces, I make no doubt but he will prove a compoſite pillar to the republic of letters. [*Enter* Bever.] This, Sir, is the ſchool from whence ſo many capital maſters have iſſued, the river that enriches the regions of ſcience.

*Dac.* Of which river, Sir Thomas, you are the ſource; here we quaff: Et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.

*Sir Tho.* Purpureo! Delicate, indeed! Mr. Dactyl. Do you hear, Mr. Bever? Bibimus ore nectar. You, young gentleman, muſt be inſtructed to quote; nothing gives a period more ſpirit than a happy Latin quotation, nor has indeed a finer effect at the head of an eſſay. Poor Dick Steel! I have obliged him with many a motto for his fugitive pieces.

*Puff.* Ay, and with the contents too; or Sir Richard is foully bely'd.

*Enter* Servant.

*Serv.* Sir Roger Dowlas.

*Sir Tho.* Pray deſire him to enter. [*Exit* Serv.] Sir Roger, gentlemen, is a conſiderable Eaſt-India proprietor; and ſeems deſirous of collecting from this learned aſſembly ſome rhetorical flowers, which he hopes to ſtrew with honour to himſelf, and advantage to the company, at Merchant-taylors-hall. [*Enter* Sir Roger Dowlas.] Sir Roger, be ſeated. This gentleman has, in common with the greateſt orator the world ever ſaw, a ſmall natural infirmity; he ſtutters a little: But I have preſcribed the ſame remedy that Demoſthenes us'd, and don't deſpair of a radical cure. Well, Sir, have you digeſted thoſe general rules?

*Sir Rog.* Pr--ett--y well, I am obli--g'd to you, Sir Thomas.

*Sir Tho.* Have you been regular in taking your tincture of ſage, to give you confidence for ſpeaking in public?

*Sir Rog.* Y--es, Sir Thomas.

*Sir Tho.* Did you open at the laſt general court?

*Sir Rog.* I attem--p-ted fo--ur or fi--ve times.

*Sir Tho.* What hinder'd your progreſs?

*Sir Rog.* The pe--b--bles.

*Sir Tho.* Oh, the pebbles in his mouth. But they are only put in to practiſe in private; you ſhould take them out when you are addreſſing the public.

*Sir Rog.* Yes; I will for the fu--ture.

*Sir Tho.* Well, Mr. Ruſt, you had a tête à tête with my niece. A propos, Mr. Bever, here offers a fine occaſion for you; we ſhall take the liberty to trouble your muſe on their nuptials: O Love! O Hymen! here prune thy purple wings; trim thy bright torch. Hey, Mr. Bever?

*Bev.* My talents are at Sir Thomas Loſty's direction; tho' I muſt deſpair of producing any performance worthy the attention of ſo compleat a judge of the elegant arts.

*Sir Tho.* Too modeſt, good Mr. Bever. Well, Mr. Ruſt, any new acquiſition, ſince our laſt meeting, to your matchleſs collection.

*Ruſt.* Why, Sir Thomas, I have both loſt and gain'd ſince I ſaw you.

*Sir Tho.* Loſt! I am ſorry for that.

*Ruſt.* The curious ſarcophagus, that was ſent me from Naples by Signor Belloni.

*Sir Tho.* You mean the urn that was ſuppoſed to contain the duſt of Agrippa.

*Ruſt.* Suppos'd! no doubt but it did.

*Sir Tho.* I hope no ſiniſter accident to that ineſtimable relic of Rome.

*Ruſt.* It's gone.

*Sir Tho.* Gone! oh, illiberal! What, ſtolen, I ſuppoſe, by ſome connoiſſeur?

*Ruſt.* Worſe, worſe! a prey, a martyr to ignorance: A houſe-maid that I hir'd laſt week miſtook it for a broken green chamber-pot, and ſent it away in the duſt-cart.

*Sir*

*Sir Tho.* She merits impaling. Oh, the Hun!

*Dac.* The Vandal!

*All.* The Viſigoth!

*Ruſt.* But I have this day acquir'd a treaſure that will in ſome meaſure make me amends.

*Sir Tho.* Indeed! what can that be?

*Puff.* That muſt be ſomething curious, indeed.

*Ruſt.* It has coſt me infinite trouble to get it.

*Dac.* Great rarities are not had without pains.

*Ruſt.* It is three months ago ſince I got the firſt ſcent of it, and I have been ever ſince on the hunt; but all to no purpoſe.

*Sir Tho.* I am quite upon thorns till I ſee it.

*Ruſt.* And yeſterday, when I had given it over, when all my hopes were grown deſperate, it fell into my hands, by the moſt unexpected and wonderful accident.

*Sir Tho.* Quod optanti divûm promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.
Mr. Bever, you remark my quotation?

*Bev.* Moſt happy. Oh, Sir, nothing you ſay can be loſt.

*Ruſt.* I have brought it here in my pocket; I am no churl; I love to pleaſure my friends.

*Sir Tho.* You are, Mr. Ruſt, extremely obliging.

*All.* Very kind, very obliging indeed.

*Ruſt.* It was not much hurt by the fire.

*Sir Tho.* Very fortunate.

*Ruſt.* The edges are ſoil'd by the link: but many of the letters are exceedingly legible.

*Sir Rog.* A li--tle roo--m, if you p--leaſe.

*Ruſt.* Here it is; the precious remains of the very North Briton that was burnt at the Royal-Exchange.

*Sir Tho.* Number forty-five?

*Ruſt.* The ſame.

*Bev.* You are a lucky man, Mr. Ruſt.

*Ruſt.* I think ſo. But, Gentlemen, I hope I need not give you a caution: Huſh—ſilence—no words on this matter.

*Dac.* You may depend upon us.

*Ruſt.* For as the paper has not ſuffer'd the law, I don't know whether they may not ſeize it again.

*Sir Tho.* With us you are ſafe, Mr. Ruſt. Well, young gentleman, you ſee we cultivate all branches of ſcience.

*Bev.* Amazing, indeed! But when we conſider you, Sir Thomas, as the directing, the ruling planet, our wonder ſubſides in an inſtant. Science firſt ſaw the day with Socrates in the Attic portico; her early years were ſpent with Tully in the Tuſculan ſhade; but her ripe, maturer hours, ſhe enjoys with Sir Thomas Lofty, near Cavendiſh-ſquare.

*Sir Tho.* The moſt claſſical compliment I ever receiv'd, Gentlemen, a philoſophical repaſt attends your acceptance within. Sir Roger, you'll lead the way. [*Exeunt all but* Sir Thomas *and* Bever.] Mr. Bever, may I beg your ear for a moment. Mr. Bever, the friendſhip I have for your father ſecur'd you at firſt a gracious reception from me; but what I then paid to on old obligation, is now, Sir, due to your own particular merit.

*Bev.* I am happy, Sir Thomas, if——

*Sir Tho.* Your patience. There is in you, Mr. Bever, a fire of imagination, a quickneſs of apprehenſion, a ſolidity of judgment, join'd to a depth of diſcretion, tha I never yet met with in any ſubject at your time of life.t

*Bev.* I hope I ſhall never forfeit——

*Sir Tho.* I am ſure you never will; and to give you a convincing proof that I think ſo, I am now going to truſt you with the moſt important ſecret of my whole life.

*Bev.* Your confidence does me great honour.

*Sir Tho.* But this muſt be on a certain condition.

*Bev.* Name it.

*Sir T.* That you give me your ſolemn promiſe to comply with one requeſt I ſhall make you.

*Bev.* There is nothing Sir Thomas Lofty can aſk, that I ſhall not chearfully grant.

*Sir Tho.* Nay, in fact it will be ſerving yourſelf

*Bev.* I want no ſuch inducement.

*Sir Tho.* Enough. But we can't be too private. [*Shuts the door.*] Sit you down, Your chriſtian name, I think, is——

*Bev.* Richard.

*Sir*

*Sir Tho.* True; the ſame as your father's: Come, let us be familiar. It is, I think, dear Dick, acknowledg'd, that the Engliſh have reach'd the higheſt pitch of perfection in every department of writing but one ——the dramatic.

*Bev.* Why, the French critics are a little ſevere.

*Sir Tho.* And with reaſon. Now, to reſcue our credit, and at the ſame time give my country a model, [*ſhews a manuſcript*] ſee here.

*Bev.* A play?

*Sir Tho.* A chef d'oeuvre. *Bev.* Your own?

*Sir Tho.* Speak lower. I am the author.

*Bev.* Nay, then there can be no doubt of it's merit.

*Sir Tho.* I think not. You will be charm'd with the ſubject.

*Bev.* What is it, Sir Thomas?

*Sir Tho.* I ſhall ſurprize you. The ſtory of Robinſon Cruſoe. Are not you ſtruck?

*Bev.* Moſt prodigiouſly.

*Sir Tho.* Yes; I knew the very title would hit you. You will find the whole fable is finely conducted, and the character of Friday, qualis ab incepto, nobly ſupported throughout.

*Bev.* A pretty difficult taſk.

*Sir Tho.* True; that was not a bow for a boy. The piece has long been in rehearſal at Drury-lane playhouſe, and this night is to make it's appearance.

*Bev.* To-night?

*Sir Tho.* This night.

*Bev.* I will attend, and engage all my friends to ſupport it.

*Sir Tho.* That is not my purpoſe; the piece will want no ſuch aſſiſtance.

*Bev.* I beg pardon.

*Sir Tho.* The manager of that houſe (who you know is a writer himſelf) finding all the anonymous things he produc'd (indeed ſome of them wretched enough, and very unworthy of him,) plac'd to his account by the public, is determin'd to exhibit no more without knowing the name of the author.

*Bev.* A reaſonable caution.

*Sir Tho.* Now, upon my promiſe (for I appear to patronize the play) to announce the author before the curtain draws up, Robinſon Cruſoe is advertis'd for this evening.

*Bev.* Oh, then you will acknowledge the piece to be your's?

*Sir Tho.* No.

*Bev.* How then?

*Sir Tho.* My deſign is to give it to you.

*Bev.* To me!

*Sir Tho.* To you.

*Bev.* What, me the author of Robinſon Cruſoe!

*Sir Tho.* Ay.

*Bev.* Lord, Sir Thomas, it will never gain credit: So compleat a production the work of a ſtripling! Beſides, Sir, as the merit is your's, why rob yourſelf of the glory?

*Sir Tho.* I am entirely indifferent to that.

*Bev.* Then why take the trouble?

*Sir Tho.* My fondneſs for letters, and love of my country. Beſides, dear Dick, though the pauci & ſelecti, the choſen few, know the full value of a performance like this, yet the ignorant, the profane (by much the majority) will be apt to think it an occupation ill ſuited to my time of life.

*Bev.* Their cenſure is praiſe.

*Sir Tho.* Doubtleſs. But indeed my principal motive is my friendſhip for you. You are now a candidate for literary honours, and I am determin'd to fix your fame on an immoveable baſis.

*Bev.* You are moſt exceſſively kind; but there is ſomething ſo diſingenuous in ſtealing reputation from another man.

*Sir Tho.* Idle punctilio!

*Bev.* It puts me ſo in mind of the daw in the fable.

*Sir Tho.* Come, come, dear Dick, I won't ſuffer your modeſty to murder your fame. But the company will ſuſpect ſomething; we will join them, and proclaim you the author. There, keep the copy; to you I conſign it for ever; it ſhall be a ſecret to lateſt poſterity. You will be ſmother'd with praiſe by our friends;

they

they ſhall all in their bark to the playhouſe; and there,
Attendant ſail,
Purſue the triumph, and partake the gale.
[*Exeunt.*

END of the SECOND ACT.

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## ACT III. *Scene continues.*

*Enter* Bever, *reading.*

SO ends the firſt act. Come, now for the ſecond. "Act the ſecond, ſhewing," the coxcomb has prefac'd every act with an argument too, in humble imitation, I warrant, of Monſ. Diderot. "Shewing the fatal effects of diſobedience to parents;" with, I ſuppoſe, the diverting ſcene of a gibbet; an entertaining ſubject for comedy. And the blockhead is as prolix; every ſcene as long as a homily. Let's ſee; how does this end? "Exit Cruſoe, and enter ſome ſavages, dancing a ſaraband." There's no bearing this abominable traſh. [*Enter* Juliet.] So, Madam; thanks to your advice and direction, I am got into a fine ſituation.

*Jul.* What is the matter now, Mr. Bever?

*Bev.* The Robinſon Cruſoe.

*Jul.* Oh, the play that is to be acted to-night. How ſecret you were! who in the world would have gueſs'd you were the author?

*Bev.* Me, Madam!

*Jul.* Your title is odd; but to a genius every ſubject is good.

*Bev.* You are inclin'd to be pleaſant.

*Jul.* Within they have been all prodigious loud in the praiſe of your piece; but I think my uncle rather more eager than any.

*Bev.* He has reaſon; for fatherly fondneſs goes far.

*Jul.* I don't underſtand you.

*Bev.* You don't!

*Jul.* No.

*Bev.* Nay, Juliet, this is too much; you know it is none of my play.

*Jul.*

*Jul.* Whoſe then? *Bev.* Your uncle's.

*Jul.* My uncle's! then how, in the name of wonder, came you to adopt it?

*Bev.* At his earneſt requeſt. I may be a fool; but remember, Madam, you are the cauſe.

*Jul.* This is ſtrange; but I can't conceive what his motive could be.

*Bev.* His motive is obvious enough; to ſcreen himſelf from the infamy of being the author.

*Jul.* What, is it bad, then?

*Bev.* Bad! moſt infernal!

*Jul.* And you have conſented to own it?

*Bev.* Why, what could I do? he in a manner compelled me.

*Jul.* I am extremely glad of it.

*Bev.* Glad of it! why, I tell you, 'tis the moſt dull, tedious, melancholy—

*Jul.* So much the better.

*Bev.* The moſt flat piece of frippery that ever Grub-ſtreet produced.

*Jul.* So much the better.

*Bev.* It will be damn'd before the third act.

*Jul.* So much the better.

*Bev.* And I ſhall be hooted and pointed at wherever I go.

*Jul.* So much the better.

*Bev.* So much the better! zounds! ſo, I ſuppoſe, you would ſay if I was going to be hang'd. Do you call this a mark of your friendſhip?

*Jul.* Ah, Bever, Bever! you are a miſerable politician: Do you know now that this is the luckieſt incident that ever occur'd?

*Bev.* Indeed!

*Jul.* It could not have been better laid, had we plann'd it ourſelves.

*Bev.* You will pardon my want of conception; but theſe are riddles—

*Jul.* That at preſent I have not time to explain. But what makes you loit'ring here? paſt ſix o'clock, as I live! why, your play is begun; run, run to the houſe. Was ever author ſo little anxious for the fate of his piece.

*Bev.*

*Bev.* My piece!

*Jul.* Sir Thomas! I know by his walk. Fly; and pray all the way for the fall of your play. And, do you hear, if you find the audience too indulgent, inclin'd to be milky, rather than fail, ſqueeze in a little acid yourſelf. Oh, Mr. Bever, at your return let me ſee you, before you go to my uncle; that is, if you have the good luck to be damn'd.

*Bev.* You need not doubt that. [*Exit.*

*Enter* Sir Thomas Lofty.

*Sir Tho.* So, Juliet; was not that Mr. Bever?

*Jul.* Yes, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* He is rather tardy; by this time his cauſe is come on. And how is the young gentleman affected? for this is a trying occaſion.

*Jul.* He ſeems pretty certain, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* Indeed, I think he has very little reaſon for fear: I confeſs I admire the piece; and feel as much for its fate as if the work was my own.

*Jul.* That I moſt ſincerely believe. I wonder, Sir, you did not chooſe to be preſent.

*Sir Tho.* Better not. My affections are ſtrong, Juliet, and my nerves but tenderly ſtrung; however, intelligent people are planted, who will bring me every act a faithful account of the proceſs.

*Jul.* That will anſwer your purpoſe as well.

*Sir Tho.* Indeed, I am paſſionately fond of the arts and therefore can't help—did not ſomebody knock? no. My good girl, will you ſtep, and take care that when any body comes the ſervants may not be out of the way. [*Exit* Juliet] Five and thirty minutes paſt ſix; by this time the firſt act muſt be over: John will be preſently here. I think it can't fail; yet there is ſo much whim and caprice in the public opinion, that—This young man is unknown; they'll give him no credit. I had better have own'd it myſelf: Reputation goes a great way in theſe matters; people are afraid to find fault; they are cautious in cenſuring the works of a man who—huſh! that's he: no; 'tis only the ſhutters. After all, I think I have choſen the beſt way; for if it ſucceeds to the degree I expect, it will be eaſy to circulate the

the real name of the author; if it falls, I am conceal'd; my fame ſuffers no——There he is. [*Loud knocking.*] I can't conceive what kept him ſo long. [*Enter* John.] So, John; well; and——but you have been a monſtrous while.

*John.* Sir, I was wedged ſo cloſe in the pit that I could ſcarcely get out.

*Sir Tho.* The houſe was full, then?

*John.* As an egg, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* That's right, Well, John, and did matters go ſwimmingly? hey?

*John.* Exceedingly well, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* Exceedingly well. I don't doubt it. What, vaſt clapping, and roars of applauſe, I ſuppoſe.

*John.* Very well, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* Very well, Sir! You are damn'd coſtive, I think. But did not the pit and boxes thunder again?

*John.* I can't ſay there was over much thunder.

*Sir Tho.* No! Oh, attentive, I reckon. Ay, attention; that is the true, ſolid, ſubſtantial applauſe. All elſe may be purchas'd; hands move as they are bid: But when the audience is huſh'd, ſtill, afraid of loſing a word, then——

*John.* Yes, they were very quiet, indeed, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* I like them the better, John; a ſtrong mark of their great ſenſibility. Did you ſee Robin?

*John.* Yes, Sir; he'll be here in a trice; I left him liſt'ning at the back of the boxes, and charg'd him to make all the haſte home that he could.

*Sir Tho.* That's right, John; very well; your account pleaſes me much, honeſt John. [*Exit* John.] No, I did not expect the firſt act would produce any prodigious effect. And, after all, the firſt act is but a mere introduction; juſt opens the buſineſs, the plot, and gives a little inſight into the characters; ſo that if you but engage and intereſt the houſe, it is as much as the beſt writer can ſtatt——[*knocking without*] Gadſo! what, Robin already! why the fellow has the feet of a Mercury. [*Enter* Robin.] Well, Robin, and what news do you bring?

*Rob.* Sir, I, I, I——

Sir

*Sir Tho.* Stop, Robin, and recover your breath. Now, Robin.

*Rob.* There has been a woundy uptoar below.

*Sir Tho.* An uproar! what, at the playhouſe?

*Rob.* Ay.

*Sir Tho.* At what?

*Rob.* I don't know: Belike at the words the play-folk were talking.

*Sir Tho.* At the players! how can that be? Oh, now I begin to conceive. Poor fellow he knows but little of plays: What, Robin, I ſuppoſe, hallooing, and clapping, and knocking of ſticks.

*Rob.* Hallooing! ay, and hooting too.

*Sir Tho.* And hooting!

*Rob.* Ay, and hiſſing to boot.

*Sir Tho.* Hiſſing! you muſt be miſtaken.

*Rob.* By the maſs, but I am not.

*Sir Tho.* Impoſſible! Oh, moſt likely ſome drunken diſorderly fellows, that were diſturbing the houſe, and interrupting the play; too common a caſe; the people were right: they deſerv'd a rebuke. Did not you hear them cry, Out, out, out?

*Rob.* Noa; that was not the cry; 'twas Off, off, off!

*Sir Tho.* That was a whimſical noiſe, Zounds! that muſt be the players. Did you obſerve nothing elſe?

*Rob.* Belike the quarrel firſt began between the gentry and a black-a-moor man.

*Sir Tho.* With Friday! The public taſte is debauched; honeſt nature is too plain and ſimple for their vitiated palates! [*Enter* Juliet.] Juliet, Robin brings me the ſtrangeſt account; ſome little diſturbance; but I ſuppoſe it was ſoon ſettled again. Oh, but here comes Mr. Staytape, my taylor; he is a rational being; we ſhall be able to make ſomething of him. [*Enter* Staytape.] So, Staytape; what, is the third act over already?

*Stay.* Over, Sir! no; nor never will be.

*Sir Tho.* What do you mean?

*Stay.* Cut ſhort.

*Sir Tho.* I don't comprehend you.

*Stay.* Why, Sir, the poet has made a miſtake in meaſuring the taſte of the town: the goods, it ſeems, did

did not fit; ſo they return'd them upon the gentleman's hands.

*Sir Tho.* Rot your affectation and quaintneſs, you puppy! ſpeak plain.

*Stay.* Why then, Sir, Robinſnn Cruſoe, is dead.

*Sir Tho.* Dead!

*Stay.* Ay; and what is worſe, will never riſe any more. You will ſoon have all the particulars; for there were four or five of your friends cloſe at my heels.

*Sir Tho.* Staytape, Juliet, run and ſtop them; ſay I am gone out; I am ſick; I am engaged: but whatever you do, be ſure you don't let Bever come in. Secure of the victory, I invited them to the celebr——

*Stay.* Sir, they are here.

*Sir Tho.* Confound——

*Enter* Puff, Dactyl, *and* Ruſt.

*Ruſt.* Ay, truly, Mr. Puff, this is but a bitter beginning; then the young man muſt turn himſelf to ſome other trade.

*Puff.* Servant, Sir Thomas; I ſuppoſe you have heard the news of——

*Sir Tho.* Yes, yes; I have been told it before.

*Dac.* I confeſs I did not ſuſpect it; but there is no knowing what effect theſe things will have, till they come on the ſtage.

*Ruſt.* For my part, I don't know much of theſe matters; but a couple of gentlemen near me, who ſeem'd ſagacious enough too, declar'd that it was the vileſt ſtuff they ever had heard, and wonder'd the players would act it.

*Dac.* Yes; I don't remember to have ſeen a more general diſlike.

*Puff.* I was thinking to aſk you, Sir Thomas, for your intereſt with Mr. Bever, about buying the copy: But now no mortal would read it. Lord, Sir, it would not pay for paper and printing.

*Ruſt.* I remember Kennet, in his Roman Antiquities, mentions a play of Terence's, Mr. Dactyl, that was terribly treated; but that he attributes to the peoples fondneſs for certain funambuli, or rope-dances; but I have not lately heard of any famous tumblers in town; Sir Thomas, have you? *Sir*

*Sir Tho.* How ſhould I? do you ſuppoſe I trouble my head about tumblers?

*Ruſt.* Nay, I did not——

*Bev.* (*ſpeaking without.*) Not to be ſpoke with! Don't tell me, Sir; he muſt, he ſhall.

*Sir Tho.* Mr. Bever's voice. If he is admitted in his preſent diſpoſition, the whole ſecret will certainly out. Gentlemen, ſome affairs of a moſt intereſting nature, makes it impoſſible for me to have the honour of your company to-night; therefore I beg you would be ſo good as to——

*Ruſt.* Affairs! no bad news? I hope Miſs Julè is well.

*Sir Tho.* Very well; but I am moſt exceedingly—

*Ruſt.* I ſhall only juſt ſtay to ſee Mr. Bever, Poor lad! he will be moſt horridly down in the mouth; a little comfort won't come amiſs.

*Sir Tho.* Mr. Bever, Sir! you won't ſee him here.

*Ruſt.* Not here! why I thought I heard his voice but juſt now.

*Sir Tho.* You are miſtaken, Mr. Ruſt; but——

*Ruſt.* May be ſo; then we will go. Sir Thomas, my compliments of condolance, if you pleaſe, to the poet.

*Sir Tho.* Ay, ay.

*Dac.* And mine; for I ſuppoſe we ſha'n't ſee him ſoon.

*Puff.* Poor gentleman! I warrant he won't ſhew his head for theſe ſix months.

*Ruſt.* Ay, ay; indeed I am very ſorry for him; ſo tell him, Sir.

*Dac.* and *Puff.* So are we.

*Ruſt.* Sir Thomas, your ſervant. Come, gentlemen. By all this confuſion in Sir Thomas, there muſt be ſomething more in the wind than I know; but I will watch, I am reſolv'd. [*Exeunt.*

*Bev.* (*without.*) Raſcals, ſtand by! I muſt, I will ſee him. [*Enter Bever.*] So, Sir; this is delicate treatment, after all I have ſuffer'd.

*Sir Tho.* Mr. Bever, I hope you don't—that is—

*Bev.* Well, Sir Thomas Lofty, what think you now of your Robinſon Cruſoe? a pretty performance!

*Sir Tho.* Think, Mr. Bever! I think the public are blockheads; a taſteleſs, ſtupid, ignorant tribe; and a man of genius deſerves to be damn'd who writes any thing for them. But courage, dear Dick! the principals will give you what the people refuſe; the cloſet will do you that juſtice the ſtage has deny'd: Print your play.

*Bev.* My play! zounds, Sir, 'tis your own.

*Sir Tho.* Speak lower, dear Dick; be moderate, my good, dear lad!

*Bev.* Oh, Sir Thomas, you may be eaſy enough; you are ſafe and ſecure, remov'd far from that precipice that has daſh'd me to pieces.

*Sir Tho.* Dear Dick, don't believe it will hurt you: The critics, the real judges, will diſcover in that piece ſuch excellent talents——

*Bev.* No, Sir Thomas, no. I ſhall neither flatter you nor myſelf: I have acquir'd a right to ſpeak what I think. Your play, Sir, is a wretched performance; and in this opinion all mankind are united.

*Sir Tho.* May be not.

*Bev.* If your piece had been greatly receiv'd, I would have declared Sir Thomas Lofty the author; if coldly, I would have own'd it myſelf; but ſuch diſgraceful, ſuch contemptible treatment!——I own the burthen is too heavy for me; ſo, Sir, you muſt bear it yourſelf.

*Sir Tho.* I, dear Dick! what, to become ridiculous in the decline of my life; to deſtroy in one hour the fame that forty years have been building! that was the prop, the ſupport of my age! Can you be cruel enough to deſire it?

*Bev.* Zounds! Sir, and why muſt I be your crutch? Would you have me become a voluntary victim? No, Sir, this cauſe does not merit a martyrdom.

*Sir Tho.* I own myſelf greatly oblig'd; but perſevere, dear Dick, perſevere; you have time to recover your fame; I beg it with tears in my eyes. Another play will——

*Bev.* No, Sir Thomas; I have done with the ſtage; the muſes and I meet no more.

*Sir*

*Sir Tho.* Nay, there are various roads open in life.

*Bev.* Not one, where your piece won't purſue me: If I go to the bar, the ghoſt of this curs'd comedy will follow, and hunt me in Weſtminſter-hall. Nay, when I die, it will ſtick to my memory, and I ſhall be handed down to poſterity with the author of Love in a Hollow Tree.

*Sir Tho.* Then marry: You are a pretty ſmart figure and your poetical talents——

*Bev.* And what fair would admit of my ſuit, or family wiſh to receive me? Make the caſe your own, Sir Thomas, would you?

*Sir Tho.* With infinite pleaſure.

*Bev.* Then give me your niece; her hand ſhall ſeal up my lips.

*Sir Tho.* What, Juliet? willingly. But are you ſerious? do you really admire the girl?

*Bev.* Beyond what words can expreſs. It was by her advice I conſented to father your play.

*Sir Tho.* What, is Juliet appriz'd? Here, Robin, John, run and call my niece hither this moment. That giddy baggage will blab all in an inſtant.

*Bev.* You are miſtaken; ſhe is wiſer than you are aware of. *Enter* Juliet.

*Sir Tho.* Oh, Juliet! you know what has happen'd?

*Jul.* I do, Sir.

*Sir Tho* Have you reveal'd this unfortunate ſecret.

*Jul.* To no mortal, Sir Thomas.

*Sir Tho.* Come, give me your hand. Mr. Bever, child, for my ſake, has renounc'd the ſtage, and the whole republic of letters; in return, I owe him your hand.

*Jul.* My hand! what to a poet hooted, hiſſed, and exploded! You muſt pardon me, Sir.

*Sir Tho.* Juliet, a trifle; the moſt they can ſay of him is, that he is a little wanting in wit; and he has ſo many brother-writers to keep him in countenance, that now-a-days that is no reflection at all.

*Jul.* Then, Sir, your engagement to Mr. Ruſt.

*Sir Tho.* I have found out the raſcal; he has been more impertinently ſevere on my play, than all the reſt

reſt put together; ſo that I am determined he ſhall be none of the man.

*Enter* Ruſt.

*Ruſt.* Are you ſo, Sir? what, then I am to be ſacrific'd in order to preſerve the ſecret that you are a blockhead: But you are out in your politics; before night it ſhall be known in all the coffee-houſes in town.

*Sir Tho.* For Heaven's ſake, Mr. Ruſt!

*Ruſt.* And to-morrow I will paragraph you in every news paper; you ſhall no longer impoſe on the world; I will unmaſk you; the lion's ſkin ſhall hide you no longer.

*Sir Tho.* Juliet! Mr. Bever! what can I do?

*Bev.* Sir Thomas, let me manage this matter. Harkee, old gentleman, a word in your ear; you remember what you have in your pocket?

*Ruſt.* Hey! how! what?

*Bev.* The curioſity that has coſt you ſo much pains.

*Ruſt.* What, my Æneas! my precious relict of Troy!

*Bev.* You muſt give up that, or the lady.

*Jul.* How, Mr. Bever!

*Bev.* Never fear; I am ſure of my man.

*Ruſt.* Let me conſider: As to the girl, girls are plenty enough; I can marry whenever I will: But my paper, my phœnix, that ſprings freſh from the flames, that can never be match'd.——Take her.

*Bev.* And, as you love your own ſecret, be careful of ours.

*Ruſt.* I am dumb.

*Sir Tho.* Now, Juliet.

*Jul.* You join me, Sir, to an unfortunate bard; but, to procure your peace——

*Sir Tho.* You oblige me for ever. Now the ſecret dies with us four. My fault. I owe him much;
Be it your care to ſhew it;
And bleſs the man, tho' I have damn'd the poet.

FINIS.

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